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SRNL ENGINEERS CRAFT ROBOT TO DISARM IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICES

AIKEN, S.C., (June 15) - Two prototype bomb disposal robots developed by the Savannah River National Laboratory are being deployed for military use in Iraq.

The Mobile Platform for Explosives Darming (MoPED) was developed under the direction and funding of the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). The Combat Support branch of DTRA provides combat support to the military services.

The Savannah River National Laboratory developed the MoPED to provide the military with a low cost robotic apparatus for use by US Army Explosive Ordinance Disposal bomb technicians. The MoPED is designed to disable or disarm Improvised Explosive Devices in Iraq and other military theaters.

The MoPED was designed to DTRA specifications based upon feedback provided by Explosive Ordinance Disposal bomb technicians recently deployed to Iraq. The robotic device is powered by a military HUMVEE and can deploy several different disarming tools provided by the military.

“MoPED is designed to deal with a variety of explosive devices”, said Rick Pelfrey, manager of the SRNL design team. “Its job is to render explosive devices safe, while protecting our soldiers and Iraqi citizens. Successful use of the MoPED is expected to save numerous lives.”

The on-board video cameras allow the operator to drive the robot up to the suspected Improvised Explosive Device and examine the device without placing personnel in range of the explosive charge. The operator console includes video monitoring, drive control and dearming device activation.

(more)

The operator can visually examine the Improvised Explosive Device and target the vulnerable locations for aiming and firing the dearmer. Following disarming the operator may use the robot to inspect the Improvised Explosive Device to verify that it has been made safe before personnel walk up to the device.

The Savannah River National Laboratory is the applied research and development laboratory at the Department of Energy's Savannah River Site.

Note to editors: Electronic photos of MoPED are available. Contact the media contact listed above by phone to obtain the photos.

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